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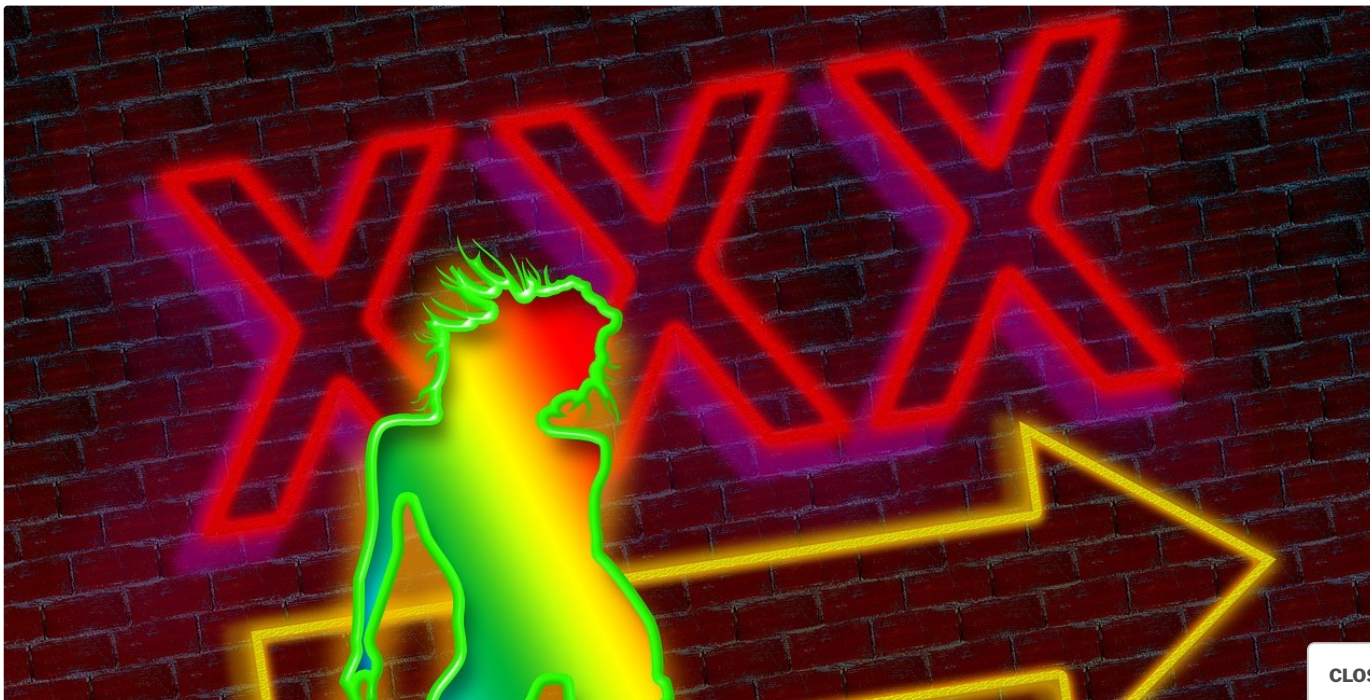
LOCAL NEWS



Federal lawsuit seeks to ban legal prostitution in Nevada

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By: AP



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RENO, Nev. (AP) — A Texas woman who says she was forced into prostitution at a Nevada brothel has filed a lawsuit seeking to outlaw bordellos in the state under a century old U.S. law prohibiting the transport of women across state lines for prostitution.

She also wants a judge to order the state to deposit \$2 million in a fund annually to assist people seeking to exit the sex trade, including providing mental health services, job training and tattoo removal.

Lawyers for Rebekah Charleston cite the Mann Act of 1910 in the suit filed Monday in federal court in Reno.

The law banned interstate or foreign commerce transport "of any woman or girl for prostitution, debauchery or for any other immoral purpose."

Legal brothel operators argue women who work there are safer than those who engage in illegal prostitution on the streets.

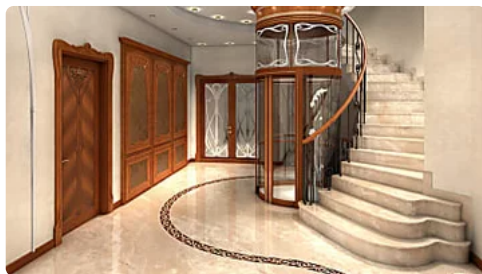
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EXHIBIT 2

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avenues.¹⁸ Most of these are prostitutes working in brothels, massage parlors, private health clubs, or saunas “in practically every reasonably-sized town and city across the country, whether in the guise of a private flat or house, or run on more commercial and professional lines.”¹⁹ Studies show that there is a high incidence of HIV infection, physical assaults, and homicides among United Kingdom prostitutes.²⁰ Other research has yielded comparable findings with respect to prostitution-involved individuals practicing their trade in countries with legal prostitution but illegal procurement, as well as illegal prostitution.²¹

Legal Prostitution in Nevada

Prostitutes can operate legally in the United States in regulated brothels inside the state of Nevada, with prostitution banned in the rest of the country.²² The brothels are all located in rural counties with populations of less than 400,000. Currently there are 28 legal brothels in the state with names such as Angel’s Ladies, Moonlite BunnyRanch, Sue’s Fantasy Club, Shady Lady Ranch, and the World Famous Mustang Ranch. These brothels are spread out over eight counties, with four other counties legally able to issue licenses.²³ This does not include Clark County where Las Vegas is located, or Washoe County where Reno is located.

Legal brothel prostitution in Nevada is a lucrative enterprise, bringing in about \$75 million in revenue annually.²⁴ However, the illegal sex-for-sale business in Las Vegas alone brings in an estimated \$5 billion each year.²⁵ According to an investigation of female sex workers in America by ABC News, there are around 1,000 women working as independent contractors at legal brothels in Nevada, but only about 300 are active in the legal sex trade at any given time.²⁶ By comparison, an estimated 10,000 females ply the trade illegally in Las Vegas.²⁷ Licensed brothel prostitution-engaged women “work a legally mandated minimum of nine days for each work period.”²⁸

Perhaps the most well-known legal brothel in Nevada is the World Famous Mustang Ranch.²⁹ First called the Mustang Bridge Ranch, in 1971 it was Nevada’s first brothel to be licensed, paving the way for legal prostitution in the state. Spread out over 166 acres in Storey County and yielding the most profits among brothels, the Mustang Ranch was “forfeited to the federal government in 1999 following [the owner Joe] Conforte’s convictions for tax fraud, racketeering, and other crimes. It was auctioned off and reopened five miles to the east under the same name but different ownership.”³⁰

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Today the World Famous Mustang Ranch is a multimillion dollar enterprise that's "run with sophistication and a keen eye on the profit margin."³¹ Described as being "like a small compound, tucked away off the highway and surrounded by mountains," the brothel has its own Web site with an "erotic menu," to "feed your desires and fantasies," with such entrees as "Straight Lay," "Two Girl Show," and "Menage a Trois."³² *Love Ranch*, a 2010 motion picture starring Academy Award winner Helen Mirren, was based somewhat on the Mustang Ranch and the lives of Joe Conforte and his wife Sally.³³

Another well-known Nevada legal brothel is the Moonlite BunnyRanch, which first opened its doors in Carson City in 1955 as the Moonlight Ranch.³⁴ The brothel, owned by Dennis Hof, was the basis of two HBO America Undercover documentaries, *Cathouse* and *Cathouse 2: Back in the Saddle*, as well as the reality show *Cathouse: The Series*.³⁵

The Dynamics of Legal Prostitution

Brothel prostitutes in Nevada must be licensed, which requires the person to be 21 years of age or older, with the exception of Lyon County and Storey County, with 18 as the minimum age. The brothel's license fees to operate are anywhere from \$200 a year in Lander County to \$100,000 yearly in Storey County.³⁶ Licensed brothel prostitutes ply their trade as independent contractors and, as such, do not qualify for health benefits, unemployment, or retirement. Legal prostitutes usually tend to "work for a period of several weeks, during which time they live in the brothel and hardly ever leave it. They then take some time off."³⁷

The health of legal prostitutes and customers is a big concern for state officials. According to Nevada law, registered brothel sex workers are required to be tested every week "(by a cervical specimen) for gonorrhea and Chlamydia trachomatis, and monthly for HIV and syphilis."³⁸ Moreover, use of condoms is mandatory for sexual intercourse and oral copulation. Brothel owners can be held liable if customers contract HIV after a licensed prostituted has tested HIV-positive. Apparently, this has not been a problem with regulated legal brothel prostitution in Nevada. The state's brothel industry has not reported a single case of HIV for one of its licensed prostitutes since mandatory testing started in the mid-1980s.³⁹ In a study of two legal brothels, it was found that "condom use in the brothels was consistent and sexually transmitted diseases were accordingly absent."⁴⁰ Most of the prostitutes reportedly did not use condoms in their sexual relationships outside the sex trade.

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In spite of the low rate of STDs and the generally healthier conditions in which legal brothel prostitutes work as compared to prostituted females working the streets, drug abuse appears to be as much a problem for licensed sex workers as their street-level counterparts. A prostitute for the BunnyRanch noted to this effect: “A lot of the girls here do drugs. Whether it’s illegal drugs on the street, coke, and ecstasy kind of stuff, or whether its prescription drugs, three or four Xanax to get through the day, most of them are on something.”⁴¹

Earnings of Legal Brothel Prostitutes

Legal prostitutes’ earnings vary, depending on the brothel, location, services offered, experience, and demand. In general, licensed sex workers tend to make more the closer the bordello is to Las Vegas.⁴² For the most part, brothels do not operate with preset fees for service. Whatever their take amounts to, as independent contractors, it is the prostitute’s responsibility to pay federal income taxes (there is no Nevada state income tax). Income is reported to the IRS on form 1099-MISC. According to Wikipedia, with respect to the process of prostitute-customer business:

All but the smallest brothels operate as follows: as the customer is buzzed in and sits down in the parlor, the available women appear in a line-up and introduce themselves. If the customer chooses a woman, the price negotiations take place in the woman’s room, which are often overheard by management. The house normally gets half of the negotiated amount. If the customer arrives by cab, the driver will receive some 30% of whatever the customer spends; this is subtracted from the woman’s earnings.⁴³

Prices for sexual services typically begin at \$200 per 15 minutes, but can go higher. According to one sex worker at the Moonlite BunnyRanch, “My rate is \$2,000 an hour for everything, \$1,000 for half an hour, \$500 for 15 minutes.”⁴⁴ Another claimed to make as much as \$3,000 a day at the same brothel, staying “at the ranch for weeks at a time before going home . . . in order to make ends meet and provide for her young daughter.”⁴⁵

Susan Austin, the World Famous Mustang Ranch madam, indicated that some of her prostitutes offered their services for between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a night or for two days of prostituting.⁴⁶ Other legal brothel sex workers “may charge up to \$10,000 an hour for ‘parties’ with well-known or novelty women, or more for parties with multiple women.”⁴⁷

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According to Austin, the older licensed prostitutes with more experience at her brothels tend to “command the higher rates:”

A woman with a little age under her belt has a lot more patience. She’s more versed in the business. The young girl a lot of times just starting out doesn’t have all the necessary tools. That comes with age, and it comes with practice. It’s like taking a rookie baseball player versus a seasoned baseball player, if you know what I mean.⁴⁸

The madam noted that the “girls at the brothel love to brag about making big money; thousands a week in some cases. But the women are willing to accept less.”⁴⁹

I have more ladies coming in now than I ever did before because of the economic times. They’re all coming in. [It’s] the only way to make some decent money in this time and age. Jobs are not that many available because of the economic times and they can make more money doing this than they can flipping burgers at McDonald’s.⁵⁰

According to researcher Elizabeth Joseph, based on a two-year investigation of the commercial sex trade industry, many men these days pay out a great deal of money for not just high-class sexual relations, but to enjoy what is known as the Girlfriend Experience or GFE, in which the prostitute plays the part of a well-paid girlfriend.⁵¹ The prostitutes are urged to offer the GFE, as the brothel owner pimps and/or madams benefit by keeping the customers happy and the money pouring in. Hof reportedly directed his brothel sex workers to “fulfill those fantasies. Be the fantasy experience you know and create them;” while promising, “you’ll be rewarded handsomely, have six figures and live happily ever after.”⁵²

One sex worker at the Moonlite BunnyRanch recently recalled being told by her employer: “I could make a good living out here and that I’d be happy. I’d never go without a roof over my head. I’d never go hungry. I’d never go without money.”⁵³

In today’s times, using the Internet is a popular way to promote oneself as a licensed legal prostitute. During an ABC News examination of prostitution in the United States, journalist Diane Sawyer spoke with a high-paid sex worker at the Moonlite BunnyRanch whose Web site drew nearly 300,000 hits per month.⁵⁴ Similarly, illegal prostituted women in Nevada

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and elsewhere routinely “advertise themselves in the online red-light district under various aliases,” creating stiff competition for their licensed and regulated counterparts in the sex trade.⁵⁵

Male Legal Brothel Workers

With the licensed legal brothel workers in Nevada entirely female for decades, a gender equality breakthrough of sorts occurred in 2010, when the state allowed the Shady Lady Ranch legal brothel and its owner/madam, Bobbi Davis, to hire male prostitutes. Davis had argued that Nevada’s “prostitution regulations were outdated and discriminatory.”⁵⁶ She received support from the ACLU on the controversial move with opposition from the Nevada Brothel Owners Association, believing the move “could invite unwanted scrutiny and hurt the industry.”⁵⁷

The one-time waiver granted to the Shady Lady Ranch on U.S. Highway 95, about two and a half hours from Las Vegas, required that male prostitutes undergo weekly urethral examinations in lieu of cervical exams, use condoms entirely as required by male customers, and submit to blood tests every month.

Davis advertised on the Internet in search of male prostitute prospects, similar to female prostitute recruits, with requirements that included: “Have a Good Work Ethic. Must Be Service Oriented. Have a Willingness to Please. Have a Positive Attitude.”⁵⁸ However, unlike the female prostitutes in her employ who were in “their mid-30s to mid-40s, based on her clientele of older gentlemen,” she sought male sex workers between 21 and 40 years of age.⁵⁹

The Shady Lady Ranch hired its first male sex worker in January 2010. Though Davis anticipated that her male prostitutes would “primarily serve women and couples, the men [were] welcome to take on male clients, just as her women sometimes [did] with other women.”⁶⁰ However, former upper-level sex worker Tracy Quan believed that for Nevada’s licensed males in the sex trade, in terms of supporting themselves through prostitution, offering gay sexual services may well be

the inevitable next step; very few male prostitutes earn a living servicing women exclusively. In every income bracket, men are more capable and determined consumers of professional sex. Women have less experience—and less inclination as well. We aren’t 50% of the customer base and I doubt we ever will be.⁶¹